GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2166
ANSWERED ON:15.03.2017
Field Office of Registrar of Newspapers
Venugopal Dr. Ponnusamy

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has decided to close down a field office of Registrar of Newspapers for India at Chennai and the branch of Press Information Bureau in Madurai and if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(b) whether Tamil Nadu has a total of 8,225 titles and the office verifies 80-100 titles a month and is so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether the Government is considering to give power to state offices to issue certificates as applications are still being forwarded to Delhi for allotting registration certificate and if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING {COL RAJYAVARDHAN RATHORE (Retd.)}

(a) Yes Sir. The Government has closed down the field office of Registrar of Newspapers for India (RNI) at Chennai and a branch of Press Information Bureau (PIB) in Madurai.

The powers regarding registration of titles are vested with the RNI Head Office in Delhi and the field offices were only collecting applications from new applicants for newspaper registration and forwarding them to RNI Head Office, Delhi, and also sometimes assisting in the process of circulation verification at the directions of Press Registrar. As the applications for newspapers was made online, the field offices of RNI lost utility. Therefore, Government has decided to close down the field office of RNI at Chennai, alongwith field offices in other States, w.e.f. 30.07.2016. The work of circulation verification has been entrusted to PIB officers posted throughout India who have been designated as Additional/Deputy/Assistant Press Registrar, depending on their level, to perform circulation verification and such functions as may be assigned to them under section 19(A) of the Press and Registration of Books (PRB) Act, 1867.
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With regard to closure of the branch of PIB in Madurai, the Ministry had undertaken a structural review of PIB offices to improve performance and service delivery of Regional and Branch Offices. Depending upon financial needs and requirements of Regional and Branch offices, the posts of Indian Information Service and other cadres were reallocated amongst such offices to ensure better utilization/deployment of existing manpower. Accordingly, a decision was taken to close Branch office of PIB at Madurai among other branch offices w.e.f. 31.08.2016.

(b) As on 09th March, 2017, the total number of titles verified in Tamil Nadu is 9,825. As far as the verification of 80-100 titles a month, this depends on the number of applications received every month which varies from month to month.

(c) No Sir. As per section 19(A) of Press and Registration of Books Act, 1867, the Central Government may appoint a Registrar of newspapers and such other officers under the control of the Press Registrar for performing the function assigned to them under the Act. At present the certificates are issued by him from the Head Office, Delhi and Register is maintained at Head Office, Delhi.

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